

**Listing of Claim**

- 1) (Currently Amended) A method for ~~preventing~~ or delaying preterm uterine contractions in a pregnant mammal, the method comprising administering an effective amount of a compound which inhibits kinase activity, said compound selected from a group consisting of kinase inhibitors U0126, PD98059 and PD18432, thereby resulting in decreased levels of phosphorylated ERK in the pregnant mammal, relative to an otherwise matched pregnant mammal to which the compound has not been administered.
- 2) (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the compound is an inhibitor of a mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase (MAPKK).
- 3) (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein the mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase is selected from the group consisting of MEK-1 and MEK-2.
- 4) (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein the inhibitor of a mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase (MAPKK) is U0126.
- 5) (Currently Amended) A method for ~~preventing~~ or delaying preterm uterine contractions in a pregnant mammal, the method comprising administering an effective amount of a compound which inhibits kinase activity, said compound selected from a group consisting of kinase inhibitors U0126, PD98059 and PD18432, thereby resulting in decreased levels of phosphorylated caldesmon in the pregnant mammal, relative to an otherwise matched pregnant mammal to which the compound has not been administered.
- 6) (Original) The method of Claim 5 wherein the administration of the compound which inhibits kinase activity results in decreased levels of caldesmon phosphorylated at a C-terminal serine residue.
- 7) (Original) The method of Claim 6 wherein the kinase activity inhibited is the kinase activity of ERK.

- 8) (Original) The method of Claim 5 wherein the kinase activity inhibited is the kinase activity of a kinase selected from the group consisting of PAK and CaM kinase II.
- 9) (Original) The method of Claim 5 wherein the compound is an inhibitor of a mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase (MAPKK).
- 10) (Original) The method of Claim 9 wherein the mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase is selected from the group consisting of MEK-1 and MEK-2.
- 11) (Original) The method of Claim 9 wherein the inhibitor of a mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase (MAPKK) is U0126.
- 12 – 35) (Cancelled)